

Jackie Lacey

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NEWS RELEASE

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Pair Charged in High-End Automobile Sublease Scam

Two men have been charged with defrauding a dozen victims out of nearly \$4 million in a high-end automobile sublease scam centered in the San Fernando Valley, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced today.

Arman Mave Hazarian (dob 11/5/71), aka Dean Hazarian, of Tarzana and Afshin Hashemi (dob 8/8/71), aka Al Hashemi, of Hollywood face 40 felony counts of grand theft of an automobile and six felony counts of grand theft. The charges include allegations of taking more than \$500,000 through fraud and embezzlement and taking property valued at more than \$3.2 million.

The defendants are expected to be arraigned today in Department S of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, San Fernando Branch. Case PA092423 was filed for arrest warrant on March 14.

Hazarian and Hashemi allegedly used internet ads to convince investors to lease or purchase high-end vehicles and turn them over to the defendants, who were supposed to sublease the vehicles at a profit, said Deputy District Attorney Alex Karkanen of the Automobile Insurance Fraud Division. The men instead are accused of selling the automobiles to unsuspecting buyers and pocketing the cash, leaving the victims financially responsible for the vehicles.

Some of the victims allegedly provided multiple cars to the defendants, resulting in individual losses of up to \$750,000, the prosecutor said.

Hazarian and Hashemi also are accused of defrauding the secondary buyers by receiving money for the vehicles but never signing over the titles.

The alleged crimes occurred from August 2017 to February 2019, according to the felony complaint.

The scheme involved the loss of more than 40 vehicles of brands including Bentley, Maserati, Mercedes Benz, BMW, Rolls Royce, Jaguar and Lexus. Some of these high-end cars were never recovered, the prosecutor said.

The year-long investigation was conducted by the California Department of Motor Vehicles, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol as part of the Taskforce for Regional Autotheft Prevention (TRAP).

The defendants face a possible maximum sentence of 15 years and four months in state prison if convicted as charged. The prosecutor is requesting that bail for both men be set at \$3.8 million.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.